

Proceedings of the 2013 ZRT convention

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Call to Order and Agenda E. D. Ursüm

Oyez! Oyez! Oyez!

Opening remarks

The ZRT has decided that it shall hold its national Convention between the dates of January 3 and January 13 15, 2013.

On behalf of the ZRT, I thank the province of Benito for its hospitality in providing a venue for the Convention.

Call to order

I hereby declare the 2013 Convention of els Zefençadéirs del Repúblicanisme Talossán open, and call the Convention to order.

Agenda

The Agenda of the Convention is as follows:

1. Speech from outgoing President
2. Report on the Election; debate on report.
3. Report on future strategy; debate on report
4. Guest speakers.
5. Ratification of Constitution
6. Ratification of Platform.
7. Election of new leadership.
8. Leader's speech.

Rules of order

SPEAKING RULES -- The Chair awards the Convention floor to the speakers. A speaker listed on the Agenda may speak when called to do so by the Chair. The Chair decides who "has the floor" i.e. who may speak at one time. Given that this is an online affair, the Chair may give the floor to the entire Convention for informal debate.

MOTIONS -- Proposed motions shall be submitted to the Chair, who will publish it to the Convention as a proposal. There shall be a period at the discretion of the Chair for debating the motion and for submitting amendments.

Once this period has elapsed, amendments shall be voted on as a list (Clark-style), to save time, with each applying in chronological order.

The Chair will then call a vote, where the members of the Convention may vote PËR (for), CONTRÂ (against) or AUSTANÉU (I abstain). A majority of those present and voting is required in order for a motion to be adopted.

All votes shall be public and shall be tallied in public.

THESE RULES OF ORDER -- These rules are proposed by the Chair and shall be followed by the chair. New rules of order may of course be adopted by a motion of the Convention.

Speech from Outgoing President
Miestrâ Schivâ

Grült méirçi, cxhn. Fosteglh. Estimadâs és estimats Zefençadéirs del repúblicanisme talossán, citaxhiêns dàl grült provincù Benito (eôa qêtevri isch a nôminâ dîn aceastâ seifetziuâ), amici peculiaristâes dîn la galeriâ, és oôreux Talossâes presînts...

ahem Friends, unaccustomed as I am to public speaking... yes, yes, pause for laughter for obvious joke, I'd like to begin with a quotation from a former leader of the United Kingdom opposition, our ZRT Leader's Cymric compatriot, Mr Neil Kinnock...

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7TOgB3Smvro>

WE'RE ALL RIGHT! WE'RE ALL RIGHT!

... yes. So as any of you know who follow British politics, Kinnock embarrassingly lost the upcoming election to a waste of space called John Major - last heard calling for a permanent Tory/LibDem alliance, so you know it's a bad idea, Carlûs. Ha ha.

But seriously, folks, British politics jokes apart, the ZRT really is all right.

Look at us. We were just a vague idea in the heads of myself and Carlûs last year. We came out of one idea and one idea alone - that while the Talossan Republic of 2004-2012 would come to an end, its political ideals and gains would never die.

Reunision, for us, was never going to be a German-style reunification, where the "losing side" of history would be sneered at, be told that its institutions, its principles, its history, its symbols all counted for diddly-squat, that it would be pretended that it never really existed.

To quote Captain Malcolm Reynolds: the Republic was on the losing side. Still not convinced it was the wrong one.

The founders of the ZRT were sure that the fight for Talossan republican principles against the monarchist millstone would cease to be an internecine and mutually corrosive Zuëriâ Fred, but instead become a political battle among friends and wholehearted compatriots.

Today, I think we can say we have achieved that. And I mean we. Not just Carlüs and myself. Not just the reviensadéirs. In fact, the majority of the people who've put their hearts into building this Convention were never citizens of the Republic-that-was.

Most interestingly, the party most dominated by former Republicans are the Peculiarists up there in the balcony. You can see the light glinting off their tinfoil hats and wizard robes.

I consider it a huge historical irony that such a reviensadéir dominated party have ended up waffling on the subject of monarchism. (This is of course a friendly dig among comrades, not a VICIOUS PERSONAL ATTACK FROM 'N GARÇÂ MALPADERT as our friends in the ruling party would probably have it.)

But all this proves, zefençadéirs! It proves that while the Republic-that-was is gone, the Republic lives on! Many Kingdom analysts and commentators assumed that the agenda of Talossan republicanism would only have appeal to die-hard Qator Itrins-waving old rebels, and that Fiôvâ would become some kind of ghetto, or perhaps historical re-enactment society.

You stand here today to prove them wrong. Every single one of you who has decided that Talossa needs a future decided by its people and its people alone, that Talossa must freely choose its own leaders and cultural guardians, has done something that has not been dared before in this Kingdom - at least, not since Danihé! Lauriér gave up on republicanism back in the late '80s.

We zefençadéirs practice what we preach! We oppose monarchy, and all other forms of permanent leadership. Which is why we assemble here today to choose a new leader, to replace yours truly.

I did what I had to do to get this party started. But I think my time as a front-rank leader in Talossan politics is at an end. I want to help a new generation take over from the old guard. And I personally want more time to think about ár glhep naziunál... perhaps, even, to start up a newspaper again.

Note that I do intend to stand for a seat on our Central Committee, and to continue active work in policy formation and legislative drafting. You don't get rid of me that easily. Carlüs Xheráltsëfiglheu has of course done a great job as Interim Leader, and I certainly do hope we elect him to that role on a permanent basis.

But look at this Convention! This great Convention, unprecedented in Talossan history!

The ZRT is not "Miestrâ written on a rainbow". Or "Carlüs" for that matter. It is not a traditional Talossan political party, where an unaccountable cabal of mates runs everything behind the scenes.

We are democratic and transparent as no Kingdom party has ever been before. Our Constitution, Platform and Manifesto will be debated and voted on openly. Then the leadership will be selected to push for those principles. There is no "secret team" lined up to run things.

Hopefully other Talossan political forces will follow our example. I do hear that the Moderate Radical party has some plans. Kudos to them.

I - and other zefençadéirs - of course have our own agendas. But we will have to win them in fair contest of ideas before the whole party, the whole province of Benito, the whole of Talossa, and of all those others (in the micronational world and elsewhere) who look to Talossa with fascination, warmth and a feeling of inspiration.

But remember this, friends and colleagues! We can't do it alone.

The ZRT is the official Opposition in the Kingdom of Talossa. Not bad for a brand new party founded by the losers of a cold civil war. But we are pretty far from a majority, either for our party or for the Noble Cause of Talossan republicanism.

Our first goal must be to replace the RUMP - the eight-term party of permanent government. There's a funny commonality between conservative parties in Western-style democracies, "dominant parties" like the ANC in South Africa and the PAP in Singapore (or the RUMP here), and the "Communist" dictatorships who rule China and North Korea and used to rule much of Eastern Europe.

This is that a one-party state is really a no-party state. A permanent ruling party is not held together by ideology. It is held together by power. It is where the elite meet to share out the treats. And thus its ideology withers away. Note how "communist" the Communist Party of China is these days. The real ideology of such a party is "staying in power". Nothing more.

You find out what a party really stands for when it's kicked out of power and has to find a reason for citizens to vote it, apart from "we're going to win anyway". The former single-party of the German "Democratic" Republic, the SED, rebirthed itself as "the Left" and is now a small but real party of socialist principle, influential in united German politics.

I wonder what would happen to the RUMP if it was kicked out of power. Would it dissolve, or would it rediscover its principles?

Estimadâs és estimats cüncitaxhiêns, there's surely only one way to find out!

But we can't do that on our own, as I was saying. Our Peculiarist friends will have to help us - as will the Moderate Radicals, the Common-Sense Progressives, and all the other forces for change in this Kingdom.

I am currently working with Senator da Dhi of the MRPT to bring about a bill which will mandate pre-formed lists of candidates for all parties in Cosâ elections, to bring an end to the RUMP's "Borg" tactics of assimilating everyone who wants to be parachuted into power, at the price of becoming part of the self-perpetuating tacit aristocracy. I look forward to many other legislative co-operative events with the ModRads and the other parties of change, in this Cosâ and the next.

Only an Alliance for Change - including but not necessarily led by the ZRT - can put an end to the RUMP Aristocracy. For that reason, I extend the hand of friendship to all parties, no matter what their ideology, who are agreed with us that Talossa needs a government under new leadership. Hopefully, once we've agreed on our platform and manifesto, that will provide room for discussion and compromise with other parties.

Friends and colleagues! We've got a truckload of work to do this coming nine days, and going right up to the next elections for the Ziu! I suggest we get to it.

I'd just like to close with a few words addressed to our political opponents... and to the monarchy itself. Gentlemen and ladies of the RUMP... your Majesty, and the rest of the Royal Family. The Defenders of Talossan Republicanism have this message for you today. Your mission is over. We thank you for your loyal and patriotic services. Your carriage awaits outside.

¡Så vivadra Talossa! ¡Så vivadra Talossa repúblicán!

Report on the Election C. Carlüs Xheraltescu

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Convention, let me start by noting how much of an honour it is to have been invited to report on our performance in the last General Election as the serving General Secretary at the time. I've enjoyed my time as General Secretary, organising the party from behind closed doors and allowing Miestra to take as much flak from our political opponents to allow us to work predominantly without interference. I'll keep this pretty short and concise, because past strategy is rarely particularly interesting in terms of political parties - especially when most of you had first-hand experience of it.

Stating the Obvious

Our performance in the last General Election was fantastic. It was genuinely a brilliant show, and for that I must applaud everyone who was involved in securing such a degree of electoral success for us. The goal for any party, I should think, is to win as many seats as possible, and

whilst we didn't achieve a majority in the Cosa (which is unsurprising), we did firmly establish ourselves as the largest, most stubborn, hard-nosed, and most opposition-y opposition party in Talossa. That's not a bad show considering we went into that election as a new party.

How Did We Do It?

We did it with style. We stormed the election with true revolutionary vigour and with an ideological zealotry unprecedented in Talossa. The most zealous of which was our then leader, Miestra Schiva. Crucial to the ZRT's strategy, Schiva was responsible for getting our voice heard - not long after reunision/returniture, few active Talossans could deny knowing who Miestra Schiva was. Though, there are some who say we suffered blows to our popularity due to the aggressive nature of her debating skills. That's entirely possible, though given that we have no results to compare the election with, it is impossible to tell. Schiva's comments did at least provide an exceptional amount of entertainment for some, in any case. We went into that election with guns figuratively blazing and I'd like to say we did everything we could.

We didn't.

We did everything our membership allowed us to at the time, but none of us had enough energy to go that extra mile, and I'll talk about the extra mile we'll need to go in the other speech I'll be making to the Convention.

At the time of the election, this party's leadership had not long recovered from providing the most steadfast and dedicated leadership of the Talossan Republic, which it had arguably seen. For too long, it was members of this party (though prior to the founding of the ZRT mark II) who had kept the Republic afloat, and so it should come as no surprise that steam was in short supply by the party's leadership.

And yet despite this, so much work was done in recruiting and preparation for the party's first ever challenge: the General Election of 2012. The internal party structure, though basic, was organised effectively - if the Convention will permit me a degree of self-congratulation, I spared no time in organising a group on Facebook to effectively communicate quickly with members of the party. We used it (and still do use it) to throw ideas around, and in a few weeks we had our very own manifesto - testament to the hard work, we ALL put in, especially our then leader.

What it proved was that there's a fire of Talossan republicanism which still burns brightly in the modern Kingdom; we have done well to feed these flames and keep them burning.

Since Then...

Since then, we've done all right for ourselves. We've proven ourselves to be legislatively competent, and the work that our members have put in through helping us draft legislation has been fantastically helpful. But like I said before, there's more that each of us can do, and I look forward to detailing my ideas in my next speech.

Thank you, Chair.

Report on Future Strategy C. Carlüs Xheraltescu

Ladies and gentlemen of the ZRT National Convention, Mr Chair, and worried observers, thank you for granting me the privilege one more to speak at our first Convention - it is an honour.

In my previous speech, I highlighted the main points, or victories rather, that were notable in the recent election. Certainly, our achievements were manifold, and for that we should all feel very smug. However, in this woeful attempt at speech-writing, I will draw our collective attention to what could be done in the future in addition to what has already been done in the past.

Activity

The most important thing of all for us to remember is the importance of activity. We cannot allow ourselves to be taken by apathy - for apathy is the enemy of change, and will serve only to perpetuate the maintenance of the status quo. It is important also for the leadership of the party: the future Central Committee and party executives must ensure the active participation of the rest of our membership too.

As with all large parties, the ZRT suffers from the plague of active leadership with the clear exception of a few others. If we don't nip this in the bud, we'll end up with the same people running the show every election with an increasing number in our pool of inactive voters. This is as much a failing of our leadership - myself more than anyone - as it is with the inactive members themselves. The solution to this - more avenues for participation among new members. A programme developed by the CC to co-ordinate activism at a provincial level should be a focus for us after the Convention, I believe.

Moderation, well... a little anyway...

It was the policy of our previous leader to speak publicly with an aggressiveness which some people had issue with. I personally supported Miestra Schiva's leadership then and I won't speak ill of it now, but I would ask of our next Party Leader (if I am not elected) to heed my words: the tactic of fierce debate will only take us so far. We must also learn to be moderate as well. We need to proactively work with our fellow opposition members, which we found difficult at times due to clashes of personality. The fire of the Democratic Revolution is comprised of the very same elements as every fire is comprised of: heat and light.

Of heat, we have been in no short supply; this isn't a criticism of the tactics of our previous leader either. What the heat of our ferocity allowed us to achieve is a place in Talossan politics which has an indisputably strong foundation. It was important then that we got our ideas across, and put ourselves in a strong position with a reputation for not taking brown stuff from anyone. Does this mean we should stop? No! Carry on, I say, but not to the extent to which we would see ourselves alienated from our opposition brethren.

On future election strategy...

Multimedia campaigning is the way forwards! In the next election, I want videos, recordings, flashy images, the works! We're going to need to pull out all the stops to defeat our opponents, so let's give 'em hell, Harry!

Thank you, Mr Chair.

Guest Speaker: Owen Edwards
Owen Edwards, Progressive Party leader

Thanks for the welcome. Sorry for the delay. I don't intend to "speak" at length here - I don't want to bore you, and in all honesty, I confess to not quite knowing what the ZRT would be interested in hearing from me.

I haven't been as active in Talossa the last few months as I would have liked to have been. This has chiefly been practical; I have no Internet access at home. I've checked in, I've voted, I've occasionally Gtalked with lusti. I haven't had the time or opportunity to throw myself at the political game.

But that just makes me consider more what it is, as Talossans, we share - why is it we bother talking to each other? Is it simply a pseudo-legal fiction, a shared forum space, which binds together a whole array of interests - language freaks, politics geeks, history...uh, dreeks - into one community?

Do I share a second nationality with Miestra, with Ian Anglatzara, with King John - just because Talossa is an umbrella organization combining King Ben's interests? I mean, political simulation, monarchy, conlanging...those were Ben's interests. Now, it's proven we can survive and thrive without Ben - Talossa is not Ben. The interests are more powerful magnets than Ben ever was. I should say I don't claim that Ben has formed our interests and activities as they currently stand - but I find it hard to dispute that most of our shared interests find their roots with Ben.

But the fact remains - if the interests are all that link us, then though Talossa has survived the loss of Ben (and thrived because of it), it still exists as an accident of his joys. The fact I share space with Charlie, Jeff, Hool, and the rest of you all...we're ships passing in the night, lit only by the light of a moon - the ghost of Ben glowing down on us eternally, beatifically.

That's if our hobbies are all we share. If they're all we share, then presumably when I am absent due to IRL reasons, my Talossanity is rather like an unused gym membership; it is a club I am not attending for practical reasons. One might say any nationality is the same. It's all accident.

Yet I propose that I am Talossan - feel Talossan - even in my absence. I feel British, too. I don't believe that's simply a habit of mind inculcated by the amount of time spent on Witt, or in Britain.

I think it has to do with identifying myself with something more numinous, more irreducible, than shared hobbies, shared resources, or shared physical space.

What is irreducible, what is numinous, what is absolute about Talossa that I share with you? Why is it we keep soldiering on after pointlessly unpleasant elections? Why have some Talossans weathered even more abuse so as to fight for Talossa and Talossanity - Ben's emotional bullying, or even the recent letter sent to Tim's former religious order?

Let me suggest it is something that may be music to the ears of some of my readers. This is what I believe binds us together: *Dare Something Worthy*.

If it's only Ben's interests that bind us together, there is reason for those interested in one theme to dismiss those interested in another. "I love Talossa because I love creating languages - those guys who are interested in heraldry and monarchy and stuff are weird Renaissance Fayre freaks who are forcing my conlanging to exist under the auspice of a fake King..." or again "I love this chance to imagine and experience this weird, bizarre monarchical system with its frippery and fanciness - those people calling for a Republic are taking this way too seriously, like it's a politics simulator to them..."

But what stands behind a desire to create a language - to experience a different way of thinking, of being, of being ruled - to work for a better political settlement than your own country? What do the conlangers, the history buffs, the budding politicians, all have in common?

Dare Something Worthy.

It is a desire to create, to expand, to go beyond - to model the development of language, to put aside the pseudo-democratic opinion of the majority and try monarchy, to make better, juster laws - it is, essentially, a shared "imaginative aspiration". We all aspire.

Sometimes we dismiss or attack the aspiration of other Talossans - I think that repulsive, because in dismissing it, we not only attack the very heart of our brother or sister (abhorrent enough), but we ascribe ourselves to a doctrine of self-negation, of self-dismissal. We cannot, in good conscience, do that - because we ALL aspire to not just dare something worthy, but to MAKE something worthy.

How can I dismiss the Republicanism of my fellow citizens? I can dispute it; I can even, in an informed manner, reject it (as I do, in Talossa and in Britain). But I cannot dismiss it, because Republicanism shares the same spirit, the same aspiration, as Progressivism. The fact I can return to Talossa, not as to my abandoned gym, but as to my home, is because conservatives and radicals in Talossa are, by their choice of citizenship, necessarily far more akin than conservatives and radicals in any other country. They chose Talossa because they dare something worthy. You all share my heart because of that - and I share yours.

Equally, of course, ZRTers can be guilty of the same crimes. In both private and public conversation, I've known Republicans dismiss the post-KR1 Kingdom as a childish fantasy, an indulgence in frippery - well, by their own words are they condemned, of course. I come as a guest here to rejoice in what we share - what remains when Witt and politics and every other visible sign is gone. I ask you to rejoice with me. Ignore those who slight you - but have integrity, and indeed self-respect...do not slight others and so yourselves. Now that - that would be an example of daring something worthy.

Well, that wasn't so short. I am so pleased that I share so much with you. I hope you feel the same. Now rock on and be excellent to one another.

ZRT Constitution As approved at convention

CONSTITUTION OF THE ZRT

1. Els Zefençadéirs del Repúblicanisme Talossán (the ZRT) is a political party active in the Kingdom of Talossa, agitating for the reduction of the King's influence and, eventually, an elected head of state.

2. The logo of the ZRT is as below:



3. The Platform of the ZRT is as contained in Appendix 1. The Platform contains the basic principles which form the basis for Zefençisme, the ideology of the ZRT, and the basis of membership in the party.

4. Nothing in this Constitution shall abridge the right of all party members to publically and privately organise and agitate for changes to the Constitution, Platform or leadership of the Party, given that such organisation does not otherwise violate the Constitution or Platform.

THE CONVENTION

5. The ruling body of the ZRT is the Convention. The convention shall be called together at least once in the life of every Cosâ. It may be called by the CC or by a petition of at least 5 non-CC

members. The Convention shall be composed of all Party members and any non-voting guests as the CC chooses to invite, and shall be chaired by the outgoing Party President.

6. A party member is anyone who registers as such with the General Secretary and agrees to abide by the Constitution of the ZRT. The CC may suspend party members until the next Convention, on presentation of evidence of violation of their obligations under this Constitution.

7. The Convention may amend this Constitution or the Platform by simple majority vote. It may expel members from the Party on a 2/3 majority on presentation of evidence of violation of their obligations under this Constitution, effective as of the end of the Convention.

8. The Convention shall also decide on a Manifesto, containing the key policies on which the ZRT will campaign in forthcoming elections. The Manifesto shall not contradict the Platform.

9. The Convention shall elect a Central Committee (CC) in the following way:

a) a Party Leader by preferential vote;

b) a General Secretary by preferential vote;

[The outgoing Party President shall conduct these elections.]

c) three other members by single transferable vote.

[The new General Secretary shall conduct this election.]

THE CC

10. The Central Committee acts as the collective leadership and decision-making body of the Party between Conventions. At Conventions, the CC shall present reports for debate, amendment and ratification by the membership on the previous election campaign, future strategy, and any recommended changes to the Constitution or Platform. The Central Committee shall choose a Party President to chair its meetings.

11. The Party Leader shall be in charge of ideological and political leadership of the Party, and be its chief spokesperson in public. The Central Committee may name other party spokespeople on various issues, who shall be responsible to both the Leader and the CC. The Party President may not be the serving Party Leader or General Secretary.

12. The General Secretary shall be in charge of organisation of the Party. S/he shall keep a roll of current members and administer party publications.

13. The Party President shall chair meetings of the CC, and organise discussions within the Party on the content of the Manifesto or of changes to this Constitution or the Platform.

14. The CC may suspend and temporarily replace (until the next Convention) any of its own members by majority vote, on presentation of evidence of violation of their obligations under this Constitution.

15. The CC shall be in charge of bestowing and withdrawing nomination of electoral candidates; for drafting and submitting a Party List of candidates for Cosâ elections, and other formality of nominations; and for giving guidance to the ZRT Caucus on interpretation of the Constitution or Platform in reference to day-to-day decisions. The CC may amend the Manifesto between the Convention and the election.

THE CAUCUS

16. The ZRT Caucus includes all MCs, Senators, and provincial elected officials and members of legislatures who are ZRT members, as well as the members of the CC. Those elected with ZRT endorsement but who are not party members may be observers of the Caucus. A Caucus member who is suspended or expelled from the Party shall be suspended or expelled from the Caucus.

17. The ZRT Caucus shall collectively decide its position on provincial and federal legislation and Votes of Confidence. Freedom to vote against this collective line may be granted on a case-by-case basis by the Caucus to individual members or delegations.

18. The ZRT Caucus shall be bound in all their decisions by the Constitution, Platform and Manifesto of the party.

ZRT Platform As approved at convention

1. Nationalism: We uphold the tradition that Talossa is a nation - defined by Perry Anderson as “an imagined community”. We see ourselves (or at least behave as if we do) as a nation of the world, but we cast no judgement on the validity of other non-sovereign entities' claims to nationhood. Our nation includes all current citizens of Talossa, and some who have historically shown themselves to be Talossan. We support Talossa having the full panoply of institutions of a nation-state, insofar as they are useful or fun for a population of our size.

2. Traditionalism: Talossa is the Talossan traditions that have evolved more or less continuously since 1979. A Talossan is defined in part by being aware of the history of that tradition and continuing to work within it. This tradition is always open to change - however, too great a rupture with those traditions, and Talossa will cease to be Talossa. One vitally important tradition of the Talossan nation is el glhetg naziunál, and Defencism strives towards the goal of 'n naziun Ladîntsch- where all citizens would know and use at least a small amount of the Talossan language in their daily business.

3. Pretentiousness: Although the Talossan state possesses no sovereign power, behaving as if it does is an essential part of the fun of being Talossan. Pomp, rhetoric and boasting are an important part of the Talossan tradition. However, we also see all this with a touch of irony. We repudiate that part of the Talossan tradition which honoured historical dictatorships and

oppressive regimes on the grounds that their uniforms were snazzy. In this, Defencism is a left-wing form of Talossan nationalism.

4. Democratic dirigisme: This phrase attempts to define the particular way that Defencism sees the Talossan state:

- a) All citizens should be equal before the law.
- b) All government offices should derive their powers from a popular mandate and be regularly subject to democratic scrutiny, to the extent that this does not impede their ability to make decisions and take action.
- c) The state should have real power and responsibility for the collective life of the nation, including but not limited to cultural development, settlement of disputes between citizens and relations with other nations.
- d) Real power in the Talossan state should lie where the constitution and laws declare it to lie. We repudiate pre-Revolutionary Talossa's history of "name only" governments and committees, and a legislature which debated frivolous bills while real power lay elsewhere.

5. Diversity: We repudiate the historical tradition of "cultural monolithism" in Talossa. Every one of good will who pledges loyalty to the Constitution and Laws of Talossa should be welcome as a citizen. Although we defend Talossan cultural traditions as we understand them, we recognize that the democratic will of the people trumps tradition. Cultural distinctiveness should be encouraged in Talossa's provinces - in fact, that is the main reason why they should continue to exist. We particularly defend the *reviënsadéir* culture (the culture of former citizens of the Republic) as a vital part of our national tapestry.

6. Outward focus: At all those times when Talossa has become inward-looking and static, it has become a nasty place to live. Talossa is best when we are continually accepting new Talossans, and engaging in cultural exchanges with non-Talossans of good will. We are poorer for pretending that we exist in a vacuum. We support the demolition of the Semi-Permeable Wall and full friendly relations with other Talossa-like entities and their members.

7. Republicanism: We are proud of the history of the Talossan Republic, 2004-12, and the Revolution which it founded. We believe "the Republic will never die". We seek to preserve the Republican tradition in the reunited Kingdom by pushing for the following democratic reforms:

- a) a secret ballot for all Federal and provincial elections;
- b) a system of voting for named candidates or lists of candidates, rather than "blank cheques" for party leaders;
- c) simplification and codification of the currently opaque jumble of Talossan law, making it easier for people to read and understand;
- d) progressive reduction of the political influence of the monarchy and nobility in Talossa, while recognizing that the majority of Talossans currently look to the monarchy as a symbol of national unity and cultural continuity.

Remarks by Incoming Leader
C. Carlüs Xheraltescu

Esteemed colleagues, comrades, brothers and sisters, it is with great pleasure that I come before you today to address this Convention one last time. I'm certain all of you have seen the results of the ZRT Election by now, if not, then I should probably give a spoiler alert – because I'm about to ruin the plot for you.

Firstly, please allow me to thank the Benitian people and authorities for consenting to this ground-breaking new initiative of public internal-party discourse. Already it seems as though other parties may follow suit in adopting conventions of their own, and I would encourage them to go where provinces will benefit the most from their presence. It may be debatable as to whether Benito will benefit from our being here, but one thing certainly seems apparent: the winds of change can be heard blowing through Benito, as indeed they can be heard blowing through the entirety of Talossa. The ZRT is here, not to fight the change, but to guide it.

I'm tremendously proud to be able to say that I continue to lead a party of reform. Ardent proponents of change where change is required, I have no doubt that we'll continue to fight the good fight, continue to fight for our provinces, for the Talossan nation and state, and for repúblicanisme. There's so much we can do to change this country for the better, so let us not squander the opportunity we have to do so now, and let us never give up on seeking newer and more numerous opportunities to which we can affect change where it is needed.

Next, I would like to congratulate the successful candidates: Moritz Fernaodescu on becoming the ZRT's next General Secretary (you have large boots to fill, Moritz! Heh!), and Miestrâ Schivâ, E. D. Ursüm and Sarac'h Txilvertescu on their election to the newly formed Central Committee of the ZRT. I'd also like to thank the party for its unanimous support in my continuing leadership of the ZRT, although I might not be saying that in a few months' time when election season starts kicking off. Commiserations to the unsuccessful candidates as well; don't lose steam over this, because all of our candidates are decent, hard-working folk and I can, with confidence say that no matter who was elected to the CC, we would have had a strong executive regardless – you guys rock!

I don't suppose Moritz is the only one taking on a role in which one's predecessor has set the bar fairly high either. With all honesty, as I said in my previous speech to the Convention, Miestrâ Schivâ has performed incredibly well as our Party Leader and is doubtlessly one of the more significant reasons why the ZRT performed with such a degree of relative electorally unprecedented success. As such, I have something of a monumental task ahead of me, for not only do I need to maintain our current position in the Cosa, but I must also maintain the trajectory at which repúblicanisme has been travelling in the last year. But of course, such a task is beyond me if I am without the support of the party at a grassroots level and at the executive level. To that effect, I am glad that the party has elected a General Secretary who I

believe is more than capable of providing adequate administrative assistance and relief, not to mention all the fine members of the Central Committee who I'm sure won't let me shoulder too much of the burden of leadership. Regardless, I'm sure it is obvious (I hope) to most of you that I'm not Miestrâ Schivâ. That is to say that my style of leadership is very different to hers, which is what made me such, in my opinion, an organised General Secretary. I'm far quieter and to an extent calmer than my predecessor, and it'll be interesting to see what the effect of that will be on the party's performance during my time as its leader. Despite that, I hope in time, what made me an organised General Secretary will also make me an effective leader – though I'm certain I'll find out the answer to that the next time we hold our Convention.

Party leadership aside, that doesn't mean these standard members of ours are any less important. Neither are they any less fundamental to any future successes and victories for us to bask in. What the ZRT needs is an active membership of people willing to throw a few minutes of their time in to helping us with writing a bill to present to the Ziu, agitating for democratic or republican reforms at a provincial level, or even engaging in public debate. Seriously guys, any time you can spare and anything you can contribute is not only appreciated by the party, not only appreciated by me personally, but also all all supporters of repùblicanisme. You've seen the platform, the constitution and the manifesto of the party; notice the emphasis this time 'round on party members agitating on a provincial level for reform. Revolution must come from the very foundations of Talossan society; it must start at the bottom and work its way up, spreading like a fire of liberation to provide for Talossa the democratic freedom that it deserves. We should be pushing for reform centrally as well, as we have been doing since entering the Cosa. However, we should be looking to reform and change the smaller issues which plague the democratic quality of Talossa as well as being the ushers of grand reform.

We shouldn't be afraid to engage with the people we agree with either; joint initiatives between parties we consider allied to us in efforts to democratize or increase accountability in institutions, or to secure civil liberties regarding electoral reform, or indeed structural reform. In the past few weeks (though unfortunately interrupted by that time of year when everyone celebrates stuff in December) we've been working with the MRPT on a project to secure the democratic quality of the electorate's vote – mandatory party lists. I'm reluctant to speak confidently about the chances of our success in pushing this reform through the Ziu, but the least we can do is try. Hopefully, the debate which will likely follow the Hoppering of that reform will enlighten opponents to the proposal. If not, we should not lose heart and neither should we give up. Giving up simply isn't an option for us.

I would also like to join members of the Convention and of the ZRT in condemning the actions of the Chancery in acting beyond its brief through removing the citizenship of both Andy Lowry and of Judah Benjamin. Convention, we should be mindful of due process and the importance thereof when it comes to following it. Moreover, we should be prepared to defend our citizens publicly when it comes to an abuse of power such as this. Whilst I'm certain the actions taken by the Chancery were not of malicious intent, it is in everyone's interest not only change the nature of the Oath of Citizenship and deal with the immediate problem, but also to remove the position of Secretary of State from any possible scrutiny with renewed vigour, to further “apoliticize” the

Chancery.

Let us dare something worthy, and provide for Talossa a force for democratic change, accountability and progression. Let us provide a party able to provide leadership in opposition, and a force able to co-operate with those we call allies; let us be the voice of Talossa's future. So here's to us; to the Talossan state, and to the Republic that will be!

Closing Remarks

E. D. Ursüm

Statement of thanks

The Chair thanks the people and government of the province of Benito for their hospitality during this Convention. Meirci à toct.

Formal closing ceremony

Congratulations to the newly-elected Central Committee. Here's to a bright future for the party.

I hereby declare the 2013 ZRT Convention closed.